



Nutrition Education within a Coordinated School Health Program in Schools

WHEREAS, healthy eating patterns during childhood promote optimal growth and development; prevent health problems, such as iron deficiency anemia, obesity, eating disorders, dental carries, coronary heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes; ^{1,4}

WHEREAS, school-based programs can play an important part in promoting lifelong healthy eating; ¹

WHEREAS, nutrition education refers to a broad range of activities, both curricular and extracurricular, that promote healthy eating behaviors; ^{1,3,5}

WHEREAS, school-based nutrition education can improve dietary practices that affect young persons' health, growth and development; ^{1,4}

WHEREAS, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades; ^{1,3}

WHEREAS, rates of type 2 diabetes in children have increased ten-fold in children over the past 10 years; ^{1,4}

WHEREAS, in 1997, the Institute of Medicine advised that students should receive the health-related education and services necessary for them to derive maximum benefit from their education and enable them to become healthy, productive adults; ² and

WHEREAS, Healthy People 2010 objective 7-2 calls for schools to provide health education, including education about unhealthy dietary patterns, to prevent health problems including education about unhealthy dietary patterns. ⁴

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that the American School Health Association:

- 1) Supports nutrition education as part of a comprehensive health education curriculum that is consistent with National Health Education Standards;
- 2) Encourages schools to implement nutrition education that supports healthy eating behaviors as part of a coordinated school health program beginning in pre-school and continuing through secondary education; and
- 3) Supports schools to provide experiential-based nutrition education for students, families and staff utilizing developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive social learning practices that encourage life long healthy eating choices.

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guidelines for school health programs to promote lifelong healthy eating. MMWR 1996; 45 (No. RR-9): pp. 1-3.
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3. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Healthy Schools for Healthy Kids: pp. 5-19. 2003.
4. US Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010 2nd ed. With Understanding and Improving Health and Objectives for Improving Health. 2 Vols. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 2000.
5. US General Accounting Office. 2003. School Lunch Program: Efforts Needed to Improve Nutrition and Healthy.

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